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page 5, lines 8-9. The last explicitly states that “the wafer is left to stand at ordinary temperatures” and when a wafer is left to stand, the wafer—like most things in this world—is left to stand in air. If the Examiner is asserting that this passage refers to standing in water, in vacuum, or some other medium different from air, then the burden is on the Examiner to show why an unusual medium must be assumed, instead of the usual medium of air. That is, the Examiner should show that it is customary to store clean wafers in such a special medium, and should also show that storage in air is unusual.

Air is explicitly recited at page 2, lines 1 and 14, under the heading Description of Related Art. The Examiner is respectfully reminded that the related art is, as the title implies, *not* completely unrelated to the Applicants’ method; in fact the related art is the *closest* art, and if air is present in the related art, this does *not* mean that air is *not* present in the Applicants’ method: rather, it implies that air *is* present. The presence of a feature in the related art does not exclude that feature from the invention.

The Examiner is invited to note two statements in the specification, that the mini-environment pot of the Related Art “require[s] enormous investment” (page 2, line 12) to keep the wafer clean, and that the Applicants’ method maintains a clean surface “without requiring enormous investment” (page 3, line 7). This text directly relates the claimed method to the earlier mini-pot, which is used to solve the problem of “organic substances ... present in the *air*” (page 2, line 1, emphasis added). Clearly, the Applicants’ method is used to more cheaply solve the *same* problem, namely, substances present “in the air” (not in some other medium that never is mentioned in the specification).

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In sum, when the specification states that the wafer is "left to stand at ordinary temperature," the person skilled in the art would know that this means that it stands in air, which is the only medium disclosed by the specification and the only medium disclosed to contain the organic contaminants which are the Applicants' concern.

§ 102. Claims 1-3, 6-9, 12, and 22-25 were rejected under §102 over JP07-275813. This rejection is respectfully traversed on the following grounds.

(1) On page 6 of the Action, as best understood, the Examiner states that the Applicants' argument is moot because it is based on the limitation of standing in air, which is not supported and therefore is being given no weight. The Applicants traverse this on the bases set out above.

(2) The Applicants already argued (on April 3), with citations, that JP '813 discloses only "low-molecular weight" polyorganosiloxane, not the Applicants' claimed "high molecular-weight" straight-chain organic compound. The Examiner has not responded to this argument.

(3) In the April 3 paper the Applicants also argued, with citations, that in the applied paragraphs [0009]-[0013] of JP '813 polyorganosiloxane is *not* disclosed as being applied after washing. The Examiner has not responded to this argument.

(4) The Applicants also argued with citations that, since the disclosed polyorganosiloxane boils at 60 °C, any "steamy" treatment will remove it and it will not remain on the surface. The Examiner has not responded in any way.

(5) The Examiner has not responded to the Applicants' arguments for claims 20 and 22, that the prior art does not even mention ambient molecules, much less specify their weight.

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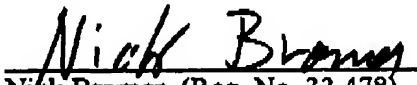
§ 103. Claims 4-5 and 8-10 were rejected under §103 over JP '813 in view of Shimizu. Claims 19 and 21 were rejected under §103 over JP '813 in view of Shinozaki. These rejections are respectfully traversed on the following grounds:

(1) The Examiner has not responded to the Applicants' argument that Shimizu discloses compounds with high molecular weights (such compounds have high boiling points), which are intended to "have an excellent stability for a long period of time ... even when used at a high temperature" (Abstract).

(2) The Examiner has not responded to the Applicants' arguments that the references teach against one another, and against the asserted motivation to combine the references.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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I certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (fax no. 571-273-8300) on September 4, 2006.

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Signature 

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